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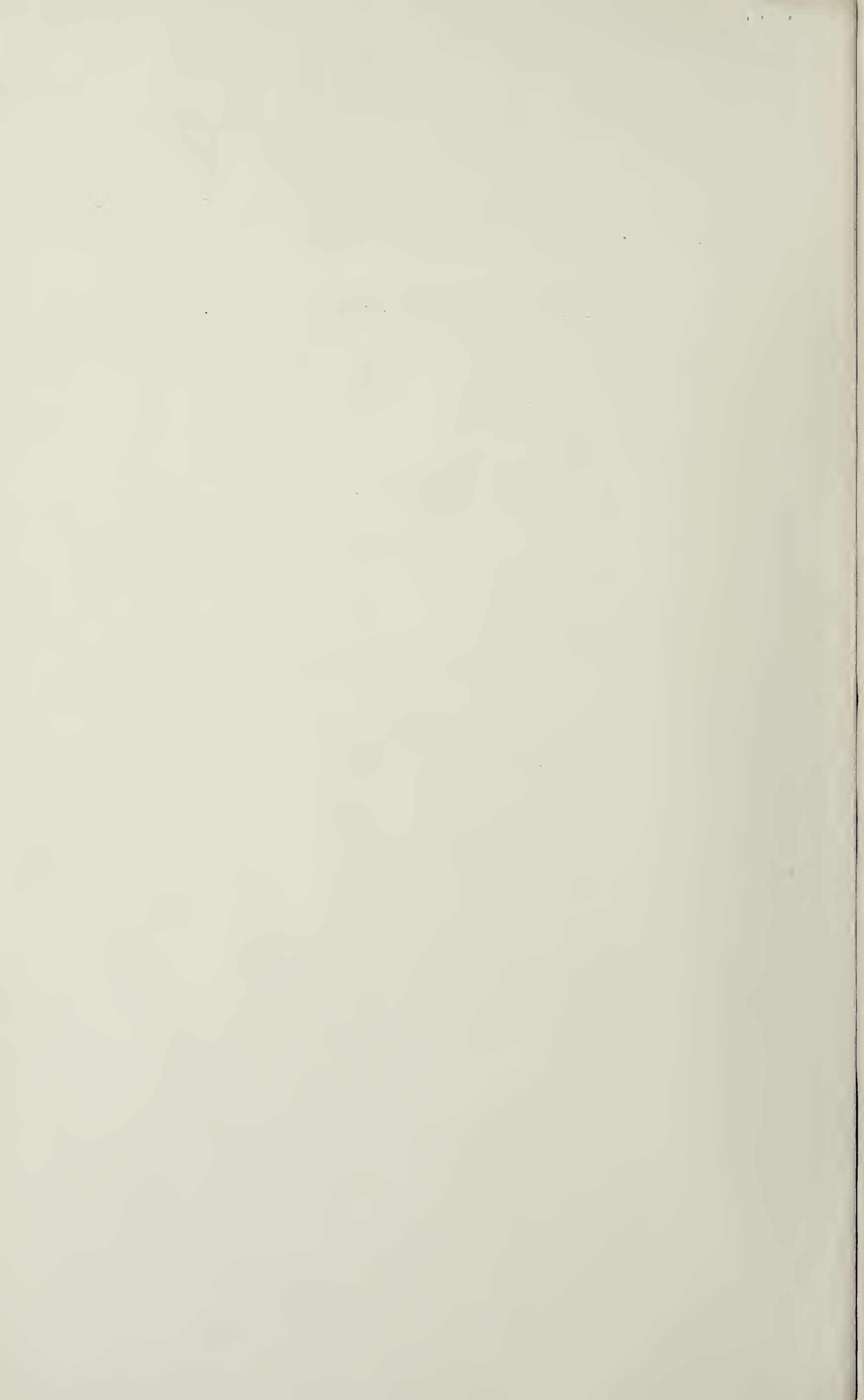
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

- on the -

HEALTH AND SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

- for -

1942.



INTERIM REPORT

on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Urban District of Newport (Salop) for the year 1942.

Once again the Ministry of Health has required that the Report on the Health of the District shall be presented in an abbreviated interim form. This being so exhaustive, statistical figures have been avoided and such as are given have been confined to those of a domestic nature and of local interest.

The high degree of freedom from Infectious Diseases is commented on in that section of the Report and in this connection the almost complete absence of Diphtheria gives much satisfaction.

Over the Country, generally, despite war conditions and the stringency of the times acute infective diseases have shown little or no rise with the exception of Cerebro-spinal Fever - a disease from which this District escaped completely. It may be, however, that that condition associated with the maintenance of the good health of a country - cleanliness - has shown some deterioration. The frequency of scabies seems to denote a lack of this and scabies has been much in mind in the past twelve months.

Turning to that more chronic infective condition - Tuberculosis - over the Country there has been a rise following a pre-war decline which has been continuous from the end of the First war. In some measure to meet this a system of mass Radiography has been evolved. To expedite the examination of patients and at the same time to bring within scope of preventive medicine a large section of adolescence and young adults (20 - 30 age group) a system of X ray photography has been invented which should be the means of bringing to light many unsuspected cases. By this system of mass X ray examination the time should not be far distant when every adult will be subjected to this type of examination at the period of greatest susceptibility. The relationship of this disease to your District is dealt with at the end of this Report.

To combat and further prevention the Ministry of Health has made arrangements to deal with the possible onset and spread of Typhus Fever - a disease from which this Country is now completely free. The danger of this gaining a foothold lies in the large proportion of our population at present abroad returning to this Country and coupled with this the

rapid means for that return. The Continent has not enjoyed this same freedom from Typhus and the danger is thereby emphasised.

Veneral Disease has shown an unwelcome increase in frequency and has been much discussed. To further prevention certain measures have been taken by Parliament to restrict, principally, the infected female being a cause for further spread and it is now possible to deal with such cases compulsorily - on report. Much diversity of opinion exists as to the relative weight to be given to the medical and moral teachings in attempting to secure eradication.

Small-Pox, an infrequent but undesired visitor has evidenced itself at periods in the past year. Scotland has been mainly affected and only rare cases have occurred on this side of the Border and no epidemics have arisen.

A precautionary measure, new in so far as to its general applicability to this Country has had to be taken in relationship to static water supplies. This, one of the protective weapons used in the defence of the Country is by reason of its nature a possible breeding ground for mosquitoes. The steps to prevent this has been the subject of a memorandum from the Ministry of Health.

Preventive Medicine has become a State Controlled Branch of the Science and during the Year much conjecture and publicity has been given to the possibility of making Medicine generally under the same control, in a socialised form. The opening of Health Centres to deal with all diseases with attendant Doctors and Specialists as required, is envisaged and while it would appear that some form of Service of this nature will result the shape and scope has still to be agreed and decided. Complementary with the above the status of those Servants of Medicine - Nurses - has received much consideration and the resultant has been the stabilisation of their system of working and remuneration.

In the immediate neighbourhood particular attention has been directed to the need for a higher standard of Cleanliness in Milk. In this connection preliminary steps have been taken in association with the Local Agricultural College to formulate a scheme for local sampling. It is hoped that by this means it may be possible to eradicate that substratum of milk producers who are at present supplying a liquid of inferior standard of cleanliness.

It is pleasing to note that, as a resultant of the special care and supervision of the Diet of Children there has been no adverse effects on the Health and Weight as a result of the War. Among the people generally better use is being made of the more ordinary foods in the home and it has been found possible to live satisfactorily on the restricted rations now in force. The lessening of Neurosis reported over the Country has been ascribed to persons being more fully occupied and busy and free from the fear of unemployment.

The Medical Officer of Health takes this opportunity of thanking your Sanitary Inspector for his co-operation and courtesy in carrying out the duties of the Sanitary Department.

POPULATION. No changes of domestic interest were noted in the returns received from the Ministry.

Certain Figures and Statistics Supplied by the Ministry of Health.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Live Births	39	34
Illegitimate Births	2	3
Still Births	2	2
Deaths under 1 Year of age	1	
Deaths (generally)	13	19

Some causes of Death:-

Cancer	...	...	...	11
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...			2
Heart Disease	...	...		5

There were no deaths from Tuberculosis or Acute Infective (notifiable) Disease.

BACTERIOLOGICAL SERVICE. This continues to be carried out by the County Bacteriologist, Dr. Rhodes, at the Royal Salop Infirmary at Shrewsbury. The centralisation in this Hospital is now complete and the whole works satisfactorily.

AMBULANCE. The facilities available for dealing with non-infectious cases are still under private ownership and despite the limitations of this service should suffice until such time as reorganisation will be able to be carried out: in all probability after the cessation of hostilities.

WATER SUPPLIES. Generally in the past this service has been able both in quality and in quantity, to meet all local requirements and the reports of the Analyst for the First Three quarters of the Year were consistently good. However, in the Last quarter an unsatisfactory result was returned which result necessitated close investigation to reveal the probable cause of the defect. These explorations were carried out in association with the Chemist and Bacteriologist of Harper Adams's College who, living, locally have always evinced great interest and have given much valuable advice on the water supply to the Town. When after a series of investigations it was considered that a likely source of pollution had been discovered it was deemed necessary to call in a Consultant on Water for a final opinion. With this in view and to safeguard the Community the means of supply was transferred to the reserve which fortunately is housed in the same building. As the reports on the reserve (in earlier town supply) have been reasonably good and as the water is subjected to purification by chlorination it is hoped that no deficiencies in quantity will be experienced during the period of cleansing and reconditioning of the main supply.

SCAVENGING. This service has been maintained on a satisfactory basis and there have been no complaints despite the fact that, in addition, help has had to be given to overcome difficulties in the transport of coal. The tip has been well controlled and any danger of infestation with rats in this, as in other parts of the Town, has been met by the arrangement with the County Council for their extermination.

SEWERS AND SEWERAGE. During the course of the Year advantage was taken of the extension to the town boundary to connect the property lying on that boundary to the main sewer. It is hoped that this will be followed by further progress in the sewerage of this suburban area which lies outside the Local Authority's jurisdiction.

Drains and ditches have been cleaned and at the sewage disposal works the outfalls, grit-chambers and contact beds have received attention.

HOUSING. Locally inspections have been carried out, particularly on Council Property, and as far as possible renovations and repairs completed. There has been no new building and it has been found necessary to renew licences on condemned properties, still standing,

to provide some degree of housing comfort and to tide over a difficult period.

MILK INSPECTION. The District continues to be served from the abattoir in the Town. Your Sanitary Inspector, alone, controls this centre which serves the Town and adjacent authorities. There have been very few complaints and the system works smoothly under this supervision.

From time to time other foodstuffs have been brought for examination and a number of articles have been condemned and confiscated. These comprised mainly tinned goods.

MILK AND DAIRIES. Periodic inspections of dairies have been made but no reconditioning has been able to be carried out. To secure a milk of a higher degree of purity it is hoped to inaugurate a system of sampling with a view to discovering the chief offenders but, beyond preliminary conversations on this matter, no active steps have as yet been able to be taken to initiate this work.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE. There was a marked decrease in the frequency of infectious illnesses in the Year and, excepting Scarlet Fever, it would be difficult to envisage greater freedom in any urban community.

Scarlet Fever accounted for 8 cases and as 7 of these were notified in the late summer it can be seen that the remaining twelve months were almost completely free.

Diphtheria, after showing a rise in 1941, accounted for 1 case only. As this case occurred in February a very lengthy period of freedom has been enjoyed. Much of this may be credited to the benefits received from the wholesale protection of children by immunisation. This service continues to be offered free to all classes and although the clinical side of the work is now within the administration of the County Health Department the facilities offered still have the same convenience. At the End of the Year the Returns showed that 62% of infants under 5 years and 73% over that age had been protected.

No other diseases manifested themselves in more than isolated units over the annual period. Among these were:-

Pneumonia	5 cases.
Whooping Cough	5 "
Dysentery	1 case.

Erysipelas 3 cases.

Puerperal Pyrexia 1 case.

the TUBERCULOSIS Register in December showed the following returns:-

	Males.		Females.	
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
1941.	11	10	5	21
1942.	11	11	5	23

The above denotes no change of any significance.

SCABIES. As a result of the Local Authorities in the District being unable to obtain admission, it will, for cases to the Centres controlled by the County Health Department it was decided to re-open the old Isolation Hospital at Newport for the purpose of treatment of persons suffering from this disease: sufferers being able to stay as in-patients if necessary.

The work of developing the buildings for this purpose was carried out in association with the Wellington Rural Council: each Council contributing towards the cost according to the size of their area. From the inauguration of the service early in February there has been a constant demand for treatment and the nursing staff, recruited locally, has been able to deal with this and meet such difficulties as arose. The Centre receives cases from all parts of the North Eastern Area of the County and the Councils not participating in the management, have taken considerable advantage of the facilities offered.

Certain structural changes had to be made on the Hospital with improvements in the General sanitation and heating, the whole greatly enhancing the convenience of the scheme.

This Centre has been recognised by the County Council in their general scheme for the control of this disease in their area.

(SIGNED) W.H.L. STEWART,

Medical Officer of Health.

20th July, 1943.

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